

Study Resolution

Transfer of the Department of Juvenile Justice to the Health and Human Resources Secretariat

Authorized by the Commission on November 13, 2023

WHEREAS, the Department of Juvenile Justice provides accountability and interventions that improve the lives of court-involved youths, and prepare them for success as productive citizens; and

WHEREAS, in contrast with adult criminal law which is punitive, juvenile law is intended to be remedial and affords juvenile and domestic relations judges more discretion in handling delinquent behavior than in adult criminal law; and

WHEREAS, many youths admitted into a Department of Juvenile Justice direct care program may have a mental health disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, or a substance use disorder and have been prescribed psychotropic medication at some point during their lives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to study the feasibility, costs, and benefits of transferring responsibility for the Department of Juvenile Justice from the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and may review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Department of Juvenile Justice, and Offices of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, and Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.